

THRAPSTON  
RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL.

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**ANNUAL REPORT**  
1919.

C. N. ELLIOTT, M.O.H.

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OUNDLE,

March 29th, 1920.

TO THE CHAIRMAN,

THRAPSTON RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL.

SIR,

I have much pleasure in presenting the Report on the Health of your District for the past year.

I am directed by the Ministry of Health to follow a definite plan laid down by them for the preparation of the Report, to which I shall adhere.

*Natural and Social Conditions of the District.*

The population according to the census of 1911 was 11,700, estimated to middle of 1919 as 10,896.

The Thrapston District lies on both sides of the Nene river. On the right bank the valley side soon slopes up to the plateau of Oxford Clay, lying at about 200 feet, which forms the watershed of the Nene and Ouse rivers. Here are the villages of Clapton and Hargrave in Northants, and of Old Weston, Molesworth, Brington, Bythorn, Covington and Keystone in Hunts.

These are purely agricultural villages, and owing to the impervious nature of the clay and the thickness of the deposit, there is difficulty in finding a good supply of water.

On the left bank the Oxford Clay appears only in one patch extending as far south as the edge of the valley of Harper's Brook. But although glacial clay covers also much of the surface of the Thrapston District, the tributary streams of the Nene, being considerably larger than those on the right bank, have cut down through the various Jurassic deposits, reaching in the case of the Nene valley itself the Upper Lias Clay. The stratum of the greatest economic importance thus exposed is the Northampton Sand, of which group the ironstone is an important member. This region is more varied, and therefore more populous than that of the Oxford Clay on the opposite bank. The villages stand in the valleys along the outcrop of Northampton Sand, from which they draw their excellent water supply.

**Character  
and Physical  
Features of  
the District.**

They are partly manufacturing and partly agricultural, and their previous decline of population has been checked during the last ten years. One clothing factory exists at Brigstock and two at Woodford. A number of men living at Brigstock are engaged in the ironworks in Corby, and others living at Islip, Twywell and Woodford are occupied either in the Islip Ironworks, or in quarrying the ironstone.

Stanwick and Ringstead factories are given up to boot manufacturing, the shoemakers working in their own villages or at Raunds.

### **Vital Statistics.**

The total number of births in the Northants. portion of the District—the population for births being given by the Registrar General 10,059—was 143, giving a rate of 14·2 per thousand. The rate for England and Wales being 18·5.

Of these 143 births a little over 10 per cent were classed as illegitimate. This is a very large proportion, and is a matter deserving the serious consideration of all right-minded persons.

The deaths in the same portion of the District numbered 149. Population for death-rate being 9,656.—This gives a rate of 15·5, the same rate for England and Wales being 13·8.

The chief causes of death were Measles 5, all males; Diphtheria 2, Influenza 11, Tubercular Disease 13, and Cancer 19. The last named is a very high figure, and one which certainly does not diminish.

### **Hunts Parishes.**

The statistics from the Hunts. parishes do not call for much comment. The births numbered 9, giving a rate of 11·0. There were 13 deaths in a population of 784, giving a rate of 16·5. Of these deaths one is attributed to Influenza, none to any infectious disease.

There were three deaths among infants under one year, which would give an absurdly high death rate, and merely shows how little reliance is to be placed on the statistics of any small population.

### *Sanitary Circumstances of the District.*

### **Water Supply.**

The question of supplying water to Thrapston and Stanwick was carefully gone into before the war, and plans prepared, and estimates of the cost obtained. I fear the latter would be of little use at the present time. I think these matters should be reconsidered. The expense will have to be faced in the near future, but you will never get the work done at the old price.

## REPORT OF INSPECTOR OF NUISANCES.

The Inspector's Report is as follows for the seven months during which he has been in office, commencing on 1st June, to 31st December, 1919.

Number and nature of inspections made :—

1.	Drain and Closet Accommodation	42
2.	Structural Defects to Houses ...	3
3.	Animals improperly kept ...	1
4.	Dirty House ... ..	1

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Total ... 47

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Formal Notices Served	...	...	3
Informal     "         "	...	...	37
Verbal         "         "	...	...	7

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Total ... 47

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The following articles of food condemned as unfit for human food :—

Carcase of Pig.  
23 lbs. Corned Beef.  
175 lbs. Dates.  
4½ lbs. Salmon.  
1 tin Meat Paste.  
1 tin Tomatoes.  
1 lb. Oranges.

Signed,

J. M. PORTER,

*Inspector of Nuisances.*

I advised the closing of the following schools during the year, owing to the prevalence of infectious disease among the children, namely, Thrapston, Woodford, Great and Little Addington, Ringstead and Stanwick.

**Schools.**

Infectious disease was specially noted in connection with Little Addington School. I would suggest that it is desirable to have an up-to-date school building for the two Addingtons. I think it would promote better health among the children.

*Food.*

The milch cows in the District have for the last five years been inspected by a qualified Veterinary Surgeon. On the death of the late Inspector, Mr. Percy Thompson, M.R.C.V.S., was appointed, his duties commenced last June. Mr. Thompson reports—"I have 145 premises to inspect, comprising 850 cows. I have just completed my third inspection, and find

**Milk Supply.**



the animals in a sound and healthy condition, and the milk fit for human consumption."

### *Infectious Diseases.*

There was a large amount of infectious diseases during the year, but mainly of a mild type. Some were severe cases it is true, but still a low rate of mortality.

#### **Scarlatina.**

Nine cases of scarlatina, spread over Thrapston, Stanwick, Addingtons, Woodford and Aldwincle, the case in the last named village occurred in a small house where there were six children. The patient, a young man aged 17, was removed to Oundle Isolation Hospital, and there were no more cases in that village.

#### **Diphtheria.**

Diphtheria was more widespread, and difficult to deal with. There were altogether 39 cases notified. The disease assumed an epidemic form in Lowick and the Addingtons. There were also cases at Caldicot (where there was one death), Stanwick and Thrapston. The outbreak in the Addingtons, which started in September, was the most serious. The first case was a boy aged 15, working in a factory at Irthlingborough, where there was some diphtheria; he soon gave it to his relatives, who crowded to see him, and they gave it to a number of other persons.

There was one fatal case, and several who were very seriously ill, on the other hand quite a number of school-children and grown-up persons were attacked with laryngitis, which I believe to have been a mild form of diphtheria. Had we possessed an Isolation Hospital in which to place the first case, it would in all probability have also been the last, and we should have seen no more of it.

Antitoxin was given in all suitable cases, and the services of the Clinical Research Association was largely used for bacteriological confirmation.

#### **Measles.**

A very extensive epidemic of measles was seen, first in Woodford. When the school re-opened in January, 1919, without any previous warning some 50 cases were notified within three days. I saw from the first that the epidemic was of a serious character and that although the bulk of the cases were of the ordinary type, still there would be a certain number with complications, such as broncho-pneumonia. I therefore applied to the County Council for the services of a measles nurse. A suitable person was sent at once, whose services were most useful, and greatly appreciated by the inhabitants. I made a mistake in not asking for two nurses, as ultimately the work proved too much for one. The first one sent broke down in health, then a second, and then a third, who was seriously ill.

After Woodford, measles spread to Thrapston, then Denford, Ringstead, and finally Stanwick, the nurse being moved along as required. There were five deaths, and I estimate the number of cases at not less than 500.

### *Children's Diseases.*

Two cases of ophthalmia neonatorum were notified, one at Brigstock, and one at Stanwick, both recovered with use of both eyes.

I am asked to state the incidence of epidemic diarrhoea, but I am glad to say that we never have such a thing in the Thrapston District.

### *Housing.*

1. The total number of houses in the District is stated to be 2,886. The number for the working classes is 1,824. No new houses have been erected during the year, and there are none in course of erection.

2. The population census of 1911 was 11,700. There have been no important changes during the year, nor are there any anticipated in the future.

3. There is no real shortage in the purely agricultural villages, but in the industrial or partly industrial there should be a demand for new houses.

No case of overcrowding has been reported.

### **Overcrowding.**

I should say that taken as a whole the housing in the Thrapston District may be considered as good, this remark applies to at least three-fourths of the District, but in nearly every village there are either single houses or groups of two or more very old and of low type still standing. The worst have been already dealt with in the past under the 1910 Act.

### **Fitness of Houses.**

The number of unfit houses in any district well inspected will obviously tend to diminish.

I have had no complaints during the year from either public bodies or private individuals.

I have inspected 19 houses, none of which were condemned. Repairs were ordered in 3 instances.

When the new houses are completed which your Council have in hand, some of the very old ones can be dealt with.

I remain, Sir,

Yours obediently,

C. N. ELLIOTT, B.A., M.B.,

*Medical Officer of Health, Thrapston Rural District Council.*

